

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PANAMA 01692 271631 Z

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 DODE-00 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-14 RSC-01 PRS-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 1692

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR PN PQ

SUBJ: VISIT OF SECRETARY OF ARMY AND CHIEF OF STAFF.

REF: STATE 055670

1) I HAVE NOT NOTIFIED GOP OF VISIT OF SECRETARY AND CHIEF OF STAFF OF ARMY. I DO NOT PLAN TO UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE. VISIT TO CZ AT THIS TIME BY SECRETARY AND CHIEF OF STAFF WILL BE SALUTARY.

2) A. I AGREE THAT STOPOVER IN CANAL ZONE SHOULD TAKE PLACE AS SCHEDULED.

B. CALL SHOULD BE MADE ON ME IN REPUBLIC AS SCHEDULED.

C. I DO NOT PLAN TO COMMUNICATE WITH ANY GOP OFFICIAL ABOUT VISIT. GENERAL TORRIJOS DURING SC MEETING AND NOW IS CARRYING ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE GAME AGAINST US. GOP OFFICIALS BOYCOTTED RECEPTION GIVEN BY DCM FOR VISITING DOCA GROUP ON SAME NIGHT AS FINAL SESSION OF UNSC. VICE PRESIDENT SUCRE CANCELED MEETING WITH ME ON DIETZ PAINT CASE WITH PROMISE TO CALL MONDAY (MARCH 26) WHICH HE DID NOT DO. THEREFORE I REGARD VISIT BY SECRETARY AND CHIEF OF STAFF OF ARMY AS FORTUITOUS CIRCUMSTANCE AND IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO LET GOP PONDER WHAT VISITORS ARE DOING HERE. FAILURE TO CALL ON ME IN REPUBLIC MAY LOOK TOO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PANAMA 01692 271631 Z

PROVOCATIVE. IF ASKED I INTEND TO SAY THEY WERE HERE ON WEEK- END STOPOVER FOR REST AND THAT WE DID NOT WANT TO DISTURB WEEK- END OF GOP OFFICIALS BUT NOT TO SAY IT CONVINCINGLY ENOUGH TO DISPEL CONCERN GOP OFFICIALS WILL HAVE.
SAYRE

CONE CANADA DOES NOT WANT TO BE THE WORLD' S SCAPEGOAT FOR ANY FAILURE OF THE ICCS. WHILE STAYING ON, HOWEVER, CANADA WILL CAREFULLY DOCUMENT ITS CASE THAT IT IS NOT CANADA THAT IS THE CAUSE OF THE ICCS' INEFFECTIVENESS. TO HELP DOCUMENT ITS CASE IN CEASEFIRE REGION V, A CANADIAN PUBLIC RELATIONS PHOTOGRAPHER WAS SENT FROM SAIGON TO BEN CAT TO FILM THE DEPARTURE OF THE POLES. HE ARRIVED 10 MINUTES AFTER THEY HAD LEFT, GAVE CHASE HOPING TO GET SHOTS OF THEM ON THE ROAD, COULD NOT CATCH UP, WENT BACK TO BEN CAT TO GET A HELICOPTER TO TAKE HIM TO BIEN HOA HOPING TO GET SHOTS OF THEM ENTERING THE ICCS COMPOUND, BUT ONCE AGAIN ARRIVED TOO LATE. FORTUNATELY FOR CANADA AND ITS PHOTOGRAPHER, A NETWORK CAMERAMAN WAS IN BEN CAT AND SUPPOSEDLY DID FILM THE DEPARTURE OF THE ELUSIVE COMMUNISTS. CANADA MAY TRY TO OBTAIN THAT FILM FOOTAGE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO FILL ITS DOSSIERS SO THAT IF CANADA PULLS OUT, IT CAN PRESENT A FULLY DOCUMENTED CASE TO THE WORLD THAT IT WAS THE UNCOOPERATIVE ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS THAT SCUTTLED THE ICCS, NOT CANADA.

3. IN THE WAKE OF THE REMOVAL OF FORMER CANDEL CHIEF COL. MARSH, HIS REPLACEMENT, COL. SIMONDS, HAS REPORTEDLY ORDERED CANDELS TO AVOID CONTACT WITH U. S. PERSONNEL. CANDELS ARE NOW SELDOM SEEN AT THE CONSULATE GENERAL DINING ROOM, WHERE THEY HAD BEEN ALMOST NIGHTLY VISITORS. CANDELS ARE FINDING IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT PRIVATE INVITATIONS TO DINNER, AND A VALUABLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON REGION V ICCS ACTIVITIES HAS VIRTUALLY DRIED UP.

4. THE NVA/ VC HAVE TEMPORARILY BLOCKED INTERPROVINCE ROAD 25 BETWEEN LONG THANH DISTRICT TOWN AND BINH SON HAMLET, LOC AN VILLAGE, AND IN PHU HOI VILLAGE OF NHON TRACH DISTRICT (BIEN HOA).

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 05031 03 OF 03 271458 Z

5. PHUOC LONG PROVINCE PEOPLE' S MOTIVATION CHIEF, NGUYEN MINH CHAU, WHO IS REGARDED AS ONE OF THE BEST OF A BAD LOT OF

PROVINCE VIS CHIEFS, TOLD AMERICAN REP MAR 24 THAT THE RVN POPULAR FRONT IS NOT MORIBUND IN HIS PROVINCE. MEMBERS OF THE FRONT PRESIDUM, WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE COMMITTEE, HELP TO PRESENT THE RVN' S LINE TO THE PEOPLE, AND THEY ARE GOOD AT IT BECAUSE THEY HAVE MORE CREDIBILITY THAN RVN CADRES HAVE. CHAU, WHILE NOT ADMITTING HE IS A MEMBER OF THE DEMOCRACY PARTY, ATTEMPTED TO CONVINCE AMERICAN REP THAT THE DP' S 14,000 MEMBERS IN PHUOC LONG (REPRESENTING A GREAT MAJORITY OF VOTERS THERE) WERE NOT FORCED TO JOIN BUT RATHER WERE ATTRACTED BY THE DP' S RESOLUTE ANTI- COMMUNIST POLICY.

PART IV: MR-4

1. AFTER A WEEKEND LULL, MILITARY ACTIVITY MARCH 26 RETURNED TO THE NORMAL POST- TET LEVEL OF 38 VC/ NVA INITIATED INCIDENTS. REPORTED ACTIVITY IN THE HONG NGU/ CAI CAI AREA ALMOST STOPPED. ONLY 3 INCIDENTS OCCURRED IN KIEN PHONG, TWO OF THEM ATTACKS ON BRIDGES ALONG INTERPROVINCIAL ROUTE 30 IN KIEN VAN DISTRICT. DINH TUONG REMAINS QUIET. ELSEWHERE, ACTIVITY INCREASED TO RECENT CEASEFIRE PERIOD LEVELS. OVERALL CASUALTIES WERE SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN USUAL.
2. IN CHAU DOC, ARVN OFFICERS REPORT THAT B-52 STRIKES IN CAMBODIA HAVE FORCED THE 1 ST NVA DIVISION TO MOVE ITS HEADQUARTERS INTO CHAU DOC. THERE IS SOME SPECULATION AT MR-4 HEADQUARTERS THAT LAST WEEK' S NVA ASSAULTS IN THE HONG NGU/ CAI CAI AREA WERE AN ATTEMPT TO GAIN A SANCTUARY IN VIET- NAM TO ESCAPE FROM US AIRSTRIKES IN CAMBODIA.
3. MAJ GEN NAM, CG 7 TH DIVISON, TOLD CONGEN OFFICERS THAT THE RECENT CALM IN DINH TUONG RESULTS FROM THE LOSSES VC/ NVA UNITS HAVE SUFFERED IN THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS. HE CLAIMS HIS INTELLIGENCE REPORTS VC/ NVA ARE BREAKING INTO SMALL GROUPS FOR REST, REFITTING AND OCCASIONAL OUTPOST ATTACKS.
4. THE INDONESIAN ICCS OFFICER WOUNDED BY A SHOT FIRED BY A DRUNKEN SOLDIER IN CAN THO MARCH 25 HAS BEEN RELEASED FROM THE HOSPITAL IN SAIGON. THE REGION VII INDONESIAN ICCS DELEGATION REPORTEDLY DOES NOT PLAN TO MAKE AN ISSUE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 SAIGON 05031 03 OF 03 271458 Z

INCIDENT (SEE PART I, PARA 2).

5. THE REGION VII PRG JMC DELEGATION HAS SUBMITTED A LETTER TO REGION VII ICCS GIVING THE PRG VERSION OF THE MARCH 15 XOAI KIEM PAGODA IN WHICH AN EXPLOSION KILLED 23 AND WOUNDED 88 ETHNIC CAMBODIANS. ACCORDING TO THE PRG, THE TERRORIST INCIDENT WAS " THE WORK OF SCOUNDRELS IN THE EMPLOY OF THE SAIGON

REGIME." THE GVN ALLEGEDLY STAGED THE INCIDENT TO " DRIVE A WEDGE" BETWEEN THE PEOPLE AND THE PRG, SAYS THE LETTER.

6. THE VIET CONG HAVE INSTITUTED A PROGRAM TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LOCAL " REVOLUTIONARY ADMINISTRATIONS" IN AN XUYEN AND SOUTHERN BAC LIEU, VC CAMAU PROVINCE. THE VC PROVINCE COMMITTEE RECENTLY SENT ORDERS TO ITS DISTRICTS TO ORGANIZE 30-DAY ADMINISTRATION TRAINING COURSES. GRADUATES WILL WORK IN LOCAL REVOLUTIONARY ADMINISTRATIONS. THE TRAINING PROGRAM APPEARS TO BE AN ATTEMPT TO GIVE A BIT MORE SUBSTANCE TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS RECENTLY ORGANIZED BY PARTY CADRE AS A PART OF THE MOVE TOWARD THE " POLITICAL STRUGGLE."

7. REPORTS FROM CHAU DOC PROVINCE INDICATE THAT THE VC/ NVA ARE CONTINUING THEIR PROPAGANDA EFFORTS TO INDUCE GVN SOLDIERS TO STOP FIGHTING. THE VC/ NVA HAVE BEEN USING LEAFLETS AND LOUDSPEAKER BROADCASTS. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THEIR EFFORTS HAVE PAID ANY DIVIDENDS.

8. ABOUT 300 CAMBODIANS TURNED UP LAST WEEK IN TAN KHANH HOA VILLAGE, TIEN BINH DISTRICT-- CHAU DOC' S WESTERNMOST VILLAGE. ABOUT 100 OF THE 300 PERSONS WERE WOUNDED. MEMBERS OF THE GROUP SAID THEY WERE FLEEING AIR STRIKES IN CAMBODIA. CHAU DOC SECTOR OFFICERS ARE UNCERTAIN WHETHER THEY ARE REALLY CIVILIAN REFUGEES OR COMMUNIST INFILTRATORS; THEY HAVE NOW LOST TRACK OF THE GROUP.
BUNKER

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